

In most schools, print-based instructional materials, such as textbooks, are a prime way of delivering curricular content. This system works fine for many learners. But for others – those who struggle to read because of physical, sensory, cognitive, or learning differences – such materials are not usable for learning.

These students need Accessible Instructional Materials (AIM) in order to access the general education curriculum. Such access is guaranteed in federal statutes, such as IDEA and NCLB, as well as Iowa's Rules of Special Education.

The True AIM website is a resource for Iowa educators and parents to learn more about:

- What are AIM? [Learn more about Accessible Instructional Materials](#)
- Who are AIM for? [Identifying students](#)
- Why provide AIM? [Understanding statutes](#)
- How to provide AIM? [Finding and utilizing AIM](#)

First Day of School

Expectation: In all schools around the country, when children enter the classroom on the first day of school, their textbooks are waiting for them. For students with print disabilities, there is no sharing or waiting for textbooks, learning can begin immediately. For the child with a print disability all of the needed books and materials are identified prior to the end of the previous school year and ordered in a timely manner. The complete texts are available in Braille, large print, audio, and digital text on the first day of school. The child with a print disability is given the same access to education as his/her classmates.

Reality: Children with print disabilities have historically been disenfranchised from having access to the general education curriculum and future employment because of a lack of access to printed materials. Reasons that this occurs are many. Typically states and local school districts do not have a system in place for choosing books sufficiently early or a system for producing accessible textbooks. Textbooks for mathematics, algebra, science, and social studies often contain many graphics which require careful consideration when adapting them to specialized formats (Braille, large print, audio, digital text).

In the long run, if it is a heavy year for complicated texts in science and math or if classroom teacher assignments are delayed or if class scheduling does not occur early in the school year, children with print disabilities will receive their print materials late, only in chapters, or not at all. When the textbooks and instructional materials arrive late, the student is not fully engaged in the general education curriculum and learning is delayed.

True AIM is the department's initiative to assist local school districts in getting accessible

instructional materials to students with print disabilities in a timely manner - The First Day. *Adapted from the American Foundation for the Blind Tool Kit*

Users are encouraged to read through the information on the website and pass it along to others. The site features several documents available for download. Questions and requests for more information can be directed to Iowa Department of Education Consultant, Steve Maurer, at 515-281-3576 or steve.maurer@iowa.gov.